(d) whether the ITPO have any branch offices in foreign countries; and

(e) if so, the details of the branches and its activities abroad?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) ITPO and Messe Frankfurt Gmbh have signed a Master agreement under which it has been decided to hold a series of world class trade fairs in India which would be of international quality and ensure larger visitorship of overseas buyers to source products from India and mobilise participation of overseas exhibitors in the events. Under this agreement, two specific events are scheduled to be organised namely "Heimtextil Tex-Styles India" at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi between 5—8 October, 2000 and "Ambiente India" at Pragati Maidan during the same period. Heimtextil Tex-Styles India is an amalgamation of ITPO's erstwhile "Tex-Styles India" with Messe Frankfurt's globally famous "Heimtextil" event, which was proposed to be introduced by them in India. The other event namely "Ambiente India" would cover a wide range of consumer durables and home/kitchen products.

(c) ITPO has no proposal of foreign collaboration at present except the above mentioned projects with Messe Frankfurt Gmbh.

(d) ITPO has foreign offices at New York, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Dubai and Moscow.

(e) These foreign offices are involved in promoting activities of ITPO in their respective regions which include mobilising participation in ITPO events in India, liaison with overseas organisers in their respective countries where ITPO has decided to participate and carrying out micro level trade promotion activities in the foreign markets relating to export promotion from India.

Working Plan to involve State Governments in Exports

1077. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commerce Ministry is working oh a plan to involve the State Governments to facilitate growth in exports;

(b) if so, whether State Governments have been taken into confidence about the implementation of these plans;

(c) whether any targets are being fixed for each State; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Centre seeks participation of States in export promotion by way of provision of adequate and quality infrastructure, input support, relief from imposts, removal of procedural and other constraints etc. States are also consulted on matters which are specific to them. In the Exim policy, there is a provision to recognise one agency of the State Government as Export House in relaxation of the criterion.

An Export Promotion Industrial Parks Scheme (EPIP) is being implemented in the country since 1993-94 under which 20 EPIPs have been approved for different States all over the country. A total sum of Rs. 152.26 crores has been released so far for the approved EPIPs.

A Critical Infrastructure Balance Scheme is also being implemented by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under which assistance is provided to States and their agencies for strengthening the infrastructure and removal of bottlenecks to exports. An amount of Rs. 136.05 crores has been sanctioned so far under the scheme for a total number of 67 projects/works.

Various Commodity Boards are implementing schemes for providing incentives and assistance for exports through the State Governments.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Disposal of Tobacco Stock by STC

1078. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Trading Corporation has agreed to lift stocks of tobacco from Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether this exercise has started;

(c) the quantity which will be bought by STC and other agencies;

(d) whether STC will make any efforts to explore world markets for Andhra tobacco; and

(e) if not, the reasons for neglect of this exports sector by STC?